Assistance to Punjab for boosting agriculture

1826. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total area of agricultural land in hectares under cultivation in Punjab at present; and

(b) the steps taken and incentives being given by the Centre to boost the agriculture in Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The total area under major foodgrains, oilseeds and other commercial crops in Punjab during 2004-05 in 7026 thousand hectares. The details are given in the table below:

Crop	Area ('000 Hectares)
Foodgrains	6343
Oilseeds	88
Sugarcane	86
Cotton	509
TOTAL:	7026

(b) The programmes aimed at boosting production and productivity of foodgrains in different States, including Punjab, are given below:

(i) Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Rice)

(ii) Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Wheat Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Wheat)

(iii) Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Coarse Cereals Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Coarse Cereals).

From October 2000, these schemes have been subsumed under Macro Management Programme with a view to provide flexibility to the States according to the regionally differentiated needs of the States. To boost agriculture sector and enhancing yields, improved crop production

technologies are being popularized. Under this scheme assistance is provided for various inputs and training of farmers/extension workers as well as supply of critical inputs like seeds, sprayers and water saving devices like sprinklers and drip systems etc.

In order to increase the production and productivity of oilseeds and pulses, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize" (ISOPOM) is being implemented since 01.04.2004. Under this scheme, assistance is provided for production of breeder seed, foundation seed and certified seed, crash programme for quality seed production, distribution of certified seed, and Minikits, infrastructure development, integrated Pest Management etc. Besides, front line demonstrations on improved production technologies in oilseeds and pulses are being conducted through Indian Council of Agricultural Research as a transfer of technology efforts among the farmers.

During 1990, pulses were brought under Technology Mission on oilseeds so as to tackle increasing import of pulses. The objectives set for the Technology Mission were (i) to increase the production of pulses. (ii) to reduce the import of pulses; and (iii) to achieve self sufficiency in pulses. Consequent to the setting up of Technology Mission on Pulses breakthrough in increasing pulses production has been achieved through an Integrated approach by introducing new crop technologies, supply of inputs and extension services support for marketing and post harvest technologies and excellent coordination/cooperation between various organizations/ departments and Ministries.

An outlay of Rs.142.86 crore has been made for the State of Punjab for Agriculture and Allied Activities for the Annual Plan 2005-06. Further, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has released a number of high yielding varieties of foodgrains crops, oilseeds, sugarcane and cotton for increasing production and productivity in Punjab.

Investment in Agriculture Sector

1827. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that investment in agriculture has gone down and is highly inadequate, and land resources for agriculture have come under strain over the years;